



**May 14, 2003**

### **MEMORIAL DAY TRAVEL PREDICTIONS RELEASED**

Memorial Day is the beginning of the travel season in Georgia when many of us take to the road for vacations or weekend trips. Driving safely and taking the proper precautions can mean the difference between having a fun trip and becoming a statistic.

The Department of Motor Vehicle Safety (DMVS) and the Georgia State Patrol (GSP) are predicting that 21 Georgians will die in motor vehicle crashes over the Memorial Day weekend. It is estimated that there will be 2,500 accidents resulting in 682 injuries. This year's Memorial Day weekend officially begins at 6:00pm, Friday, May 23rd and ends at midnight Monday, May 26, 2003 – a 78 hour period.

Statewide last year there were 2,420 crashes, 655 injuries and 24 fatalities during the holiday period. Of the 24 fatalities, 12 occurred from DUI alcohol and/or drug related reasons. Twelve of the 24 fatalities were not using safety equipment.

“The DMVS issues the travel predictions before each holiday period in an effort to save lives. Too many travelers are rushing to get to their destinations, many exceeding speed limits and many pushing themselves beyond safe endurance. Don't be one of them,” says DMVS Commissioner Tim Burgess.

Georgia State Patrol Commander, Colonel George Ellis reminds motorists to be especially alert during holiday periods. “Memorial Day weekend is traditionally the start of the summer travel season and that means more cars on the road,” Col. Ellis said. “Plan your trips carefully, don't drink and drive, and make sure your seatbelts are buckled at all times,” he added.

The State began keeping statistics on Memorial Holidays in 1969. The highest number of fatalities recorded was 27 in 1969; the lowest was 10 in 1979.

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